

wishing only wounds the heart by melliesgrant

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Summary:

will's wrist writes the words of what could never be, and his heart breaks every day because of it

wishing only wounds the heart

everyone is born with their soulmates name on one wrist, and their greatest enemies name on the other.

when will byers was born his parents thought it must be a cruel trick, a joke the doctors were playing on them, or perhaps the universe just hated their son so badly. on his soulmate wrist was written the name of a boy, and on the enemies wrist it simply wrote the shadow monster.

lonnie had cursed out the doctors and screamed cruel words at the sight, refusing to believe his son would be a queer. joyce sat on the hospital bed, sweaty from giving birth, and screaming to hold her baby and screaming at lonnie to shut up. when she got will in her arms and held that crying baby against her chest she promised to protect him no matter what, even if that meant covering his tattoos and making him promise never to tell anyone to save him from the bullying of children in the eighties.

she wanted what was best for him, and this is what she thought had to be done.

will has known his soulmate his entire life, and he has never told his soulmate this fact.

why would he when he knows he isn't his loves soulmate?

he was born with michael wheeler printed on his wrist, and he hates whatever higher being is out there for being so accurate, because he is in love with mike. he's in love with mike, his best friend, who's wrist has a girls name on it. he's in love with mike who talks about how excited he is to meet jane ives and is used to will refusing to tell him his. he is in love with the leader of his party and the boy he spends his days and nights with riding their bicycles and him running through his mind.

he is so in love with him, and he wonders what he did or what he would do to deserve this torture. it was rare someone wasn't their soulmates soulmate, and the ones that did were forced to live their lives away from love or in a forced relationship.

so will hides his tattoos with band-aids over them everyday, only seeing the mark of *michael wheeler* when he showers, any other time he covers it up and tries to deny himself his feelings and live in denial over the fact he will never be loved by

the one he loves so dearly.

it's a torture, that's all his life is. it's torture seeing his love everyday and being friends, nothing more, nothing less. it's a torture sleeping over at his house and wanting to cuddle up in his body but knowing he never could. it's a torture to go to school everyday with puffy eyes from crying every night and never knowing how to explain it. it's all torture, it's all screaming in the shower as he sobs and his mother holding him as he shakes in bed and grips his wrist and wishing any other name was printed on it. it's a torture that he will have to see the name of the boy he will always love on him everyday, a constant reminder of the land of what might have been.

and there's nothing he can do about it, no hoping and wishing on shooting stars, because the truth is printed on the other boys wrist he freely flaunts to give will byers a reality check that it will never happen.

he loves mike so much, but he hates him too for rubbing his love in his face. for showing his mark, his love on his wrist, and the worst part is he can't even blame him. mike doesn't know what it's doing to will, and will hopes he never will.

he never wants mike to know the truth about his soulmate, because he can't stand to lose him, even like this.

he goes missing and all he can think of is mike, his saving grace, the being that gives him hope in this dank and dark world he seems to be stuck in.

he sits in castle byers, cold and alone, border lining on getting hypothermia, and dreaming of michael wheeler. he thinks to himself happy thoughts, imagining mike looking for him day in and day out, dreaming of him and missing him and crying over his lost best friend. he holds himself and hopes it's true, hopes that mike is missing him and dying inside without him like he is. he wants this all to be true, and in a way it is, but it's also what drives mike to meet his soulmate. he doesn't know it yet, but he did, she's under a different name but he's falling in love while will is falling apart and in the end will byers will always lose because boys like him never win.

he whispers to himself when he shakes and hides "mike wheeler, mike wheeler, mike wheeler." and grips his wrist as he says this. sometimes he peeks at his other wrist and feels even worse. his greatest enemy is supposed to be a shadow monster, but this is not a shadow. this is tangible and human like and terrifying, and will worries that one day another monster will get him and be much worse and be a shadow.

sometimes he wonders if the shadow monster is himself, the boy known as mike wheeler's shadow, following him around, trailing after him like a lost puppy. maybe he's his own greatest enemy, maybe he'll be mikes.

he's insecure and ashamed of himself and all he can think are bad thoughts, that's what happens when you know you'll never be truly loved. it's all he can think about, even when he tries to be optimistic and always smiling, his mind is running with horrible thoughts about himself and the things around him and being taken by this monster makes things worse. no distractions, it's him alone with his thoughts and the monster that is his mind.

he's only twelve years old, and his life is a greater nightmare than any adult could imagine. he wants his mom in these moments, he wants her to save him and take him home and wrap him in blankets and hold him until he falls asleep and save him from every bad thing in the world like a mother can do.

he loves his mother so, she tries so hard to protect him, but she can never save him from the constant heartbreak that is his life. no matter how hard she tries, she can't change the fate given to her son, as much as she'd like to.

he's saved and his life continues to be complete and utter hell, because even when he's safe in the real world and in the arms of his friends he wants to cry when he smells mike and hears his stories and he wants to cry when he coughs up slugs and realizes his life will never be the semblance of normal ever again.

he's saved and he hears mike, dustin, and lucas tell him everything that happens. he missed such a grand adventure and pretends to be fine just hearing about it, but he doesn't miss the look in mike's eyes when he speaks about the girl names eleven. it's the same look will gives mike, the same look he's spent twelve years of his life wishing he would get from the boy. the girl isn't jane ives, but she's captured mike's heart in a way will never would and he's sad and mad and he wants mike out.

he kicks them out as kindly as possible, says he's sick, but he doesn't miss the saddened look in mike's eyes that makes him want to let them back in. he has to stay strong, he can't stand to hear mike speak so highly of this girl, and he can't stand to fall more in love with him when he knows he won't be loved back.

"are you ready to go home?" joyce asks, and he nods but looks off to the wall and continues to think these torturous thoughts. joyce knows the look, she knows him so well, and she knows when he's hurting himself like this.

she takes him in his her arms and kisses the top of his head, petting down his bowl

cut and trying to comfort the boy. "i'm so sorry baby, i'm so sorry." it's all she can say, and will is too drained to speak or cry or do anything. he sits their motionless in her arms, the heartbreak numbing inside him as she takes him home

mike never leaves his side and protects him at every chance, and will thinks this is the closest he'll ever get to mike loving him back. he takes advantage of it, the sleepovers at his house and the constant attention, he bathes in it and wishes this is what his lifetime would be filled with.

it comes at the cost of him mentioning eleven, the gone girl that took his heart, but it's worth it when he hugs him and let's him know he's his best friend. maybe being a best friend is good enough, maybe that'll be enough to appease will's breaking heart.

he only makes one mistake in his lifetime when it comes to his love for michael wheeler, and that's when he admits it.

he's thirteen and it's almost a year since the nightmare happened, and he stays at mike's side constantly because his arm around his shoulder feels protective and a force field for every bad thing in the world. he goes to his house after school every day and they relax in his basement, eating snacks and laughing and playing games. it's on one of these days it happens.

they're stealing candy the wheeler's plan to hand out for halloween and will grabbed a snickers and mike didn't.

"i'll trade you the snickers for a kit kat?" mike asked, those were the only two they were able to grab when they sneaked past mrs. wheeler.

"no way! snickers are way better than kit kats." will teased, trying to open his snickers.

"exactly, please trade them. i'll do anything, even go as far to tickle you." mike knew will was extremely ticklish, and that was the thing he hated the most in life.

will's jaw dropped, and his eyes widened at the boy who had only gotten better looking in the past year. "you wouldn't."

"i would." mike's now deeper voice responded. "and i will!" he screams as he jumps towards will and tickles him all over his waist.

he's on top of him and his hands are bigger now and they're making will laugh and scream and trying to get him to stop, and mike laughs with him until will bangs his

smaller hands on his chest and begs him to stop before he pees his pants.

mike does, and when will calms down from the attack he looks up. he looks up at the person meant for him but he could never retrieve. he looks at the handsome face he could never touch, never kiss, the lips that would never say loved him and the eyes that would never glance at him filled with love.

except, maybe will's eyes are deceiving him, but mike's looking at him. he's looking at him in a different way, maybe not love, but in a way that means everything to will and nothing to him. he looks at him in a way that makes his heart flutter, he looks at him in a way that makes him say something he shouldn't say.

"i love you." it's breathy and sad and filled with hope, and will looks into mike's eyes for some type of reaction.

he doesn't get any, but he can't be surprised.

"i love you too, will. you're my best friend." mike smiles at him, getting off and walking away.

it means absolutely nothing to him, and will stays there and closes his eyes and wishing that comment was used in a different way.

he opens them and a tear falls out, he wipes it away before mike sees, and he thinks this is the final straw in his hopeful days.

he numbs his heart from that day on and he loves mike all the same, because he can love him just fine, but now he truly knows he will never be loved back by him.

he wasn't meant for that life, he wasn't meant to be happy.